

**Minutes of the Meeting
December 18th, 1997**

Projects Reviewed

Queen Anne Standpipe and Pump Station
“Growing Vine Street”
2600 Vine Street
Sand Point Reuse Project

Convened: 9:00 am

Adjourned: 5:00pm

Commissioners Present

Barbara Swift, Chair
Moe Batra
Gail Dubrow
Robert Foley
Gerald Hansmire
Rick Sundberg

Staff Present

Marcia Wagoner
Peter Aylsworth
Rebecca Walls

121897.1 Project: **Queen Anne Standpipe and Pump Station**
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Aziz Alfi, Seattle Public Utilities
 Fred Aigbe, Seattle Public Utilities
 Attendees: Susan Black, Susan Black & Associates
 Warner Gee, Seattle Public Utilities
 Bob Harding, Susan Black & Associates
 Ted Luebke, Seattle Public Utilities
 Time: 1.25 hr. (0.3%)

The purpose of this project is to replace the two existing water tanks with a single tank and to install an underground pump station. The site is on top of Queen Anne hill and has a variety of users; a City Light communication tower, two public tennis courts, and a fire station. It is primarily a neighborhood park rather than a destination park. The project was presented to the community in the past.

The first existing tank was constructed in 1901 and has a steel interior tank with a concrete shell. It is approximately 37 feet in diameter, with a 60 foot high tank shell around a 69 foot high tank., and has a 318,000-gallon capacity. The concrete shell of this tank began cracking in the mid-forties and steel bands with grout were then added to repair the damage. Recently these bands as well as the grout on the shell have been failing. The second existing tank was constructed in 1904 and has an 883,000-gallon capacity. This tank is approximately 50 feet in diameter and about 69 feet high.

The reasons for a new tank are additional storage capacity totaling 2.2 million gallons, better seismic reliability, increased storage, and better service to the neighborhood. This new tank would be approximately 78 feet in diameter and 69 feet high.

The new pump station will be located below the south tennis court with access near the corner of Warren Avenue and Lee Street. The station will be made of concrete with a vent portion above ground and surrounded with plantings. This project is being constructed in response to community requests. The project is being done mainly to improve customer service. Current water pressure around the site is below the minimum standard of 30 psi. Residents have very low pressure in the upper floors of their homes. The project will probably begin in August of 1998 and last nine months. The new tank construction will follow. Landscape improvements to the site will occur in conjunction with the new tank construction.

The landscape part of the project is simply trying to make the park more attractive to its users. The site is almost completely paved. The design team is using vegetation around the tank where possible in the form of grass and tall plantings. The new landscape will be maintained by the Parks Department. The project is still in the neighborhood planning process and will consider community comments and suggestions.

Discussion:

Dubrow: What was the range of community response to the project?

Alfi: It was two or three years ago that we presented it to the community. In terms of seismic liability the community appreciated the importance of the water source in case of earthquake fires and the ability of the fire station to function without impact from damage to the tanks in case of an earthquake. We have also made presentations to the Tennis Advisory Board about the project.

- Dubrow:** Was there any community concern about the size and reflectivity of the new tank?
- Alfi:** We left the exterior finishes undecided. There are many options for finishing the tank surface.
- Dubrow:** The scale of the new tank seems out of place. Having two tanks scaled down the volume nicely. What alternatives to the single new tank were considered?
- Sundberg:** I echo all of those comments.
- Alfi:** We cannot replace the small tanks with similar tanks and get the increased volume. The site is so crowded that there isn't room.
- Dubrow:** What is the volume of the old tanks compared to the new tank?
- Alfi:** The existing tanks hold about 1.3 million gallons total and the new tank would hold 2.2 million gallons.
- Dubrow:** The increased capacity resulted in an immense increase in volume and scale.
- Wagoner:** A neighborhood planning process has been put in place recently. Given the increased level of interest in the original tanks as historic landmarks, you may need to present this project again to the public.
- Sundberg:** Is there any chance of restoring the original tank? This project has some serious scale issues. I think that the community is going to have a problem with this monstrous new tank.
- Wagoner:** The community has probably changed significantly since your last public presentation.
- Dubrow:** Things that would have been accepted a couple of years ago are now being questioned. It seems like you haven't fully dealt with community interests.
- Hansmire:** Is there a possibility of rearranging the site to accommodate a larger tank? The community might be willing to swap tennis for a less obtrusive tank.
- Alfi:** We held a community meeting in 1993 and another one is planned. The Parks Department and the Tennis Advisory Board want to keep the courts.
- Hansmire:** I agree that you should talk to the neighborhood about this new design.
- Dubrow:** If we assume that this is the only alternative, then you are dealing adequately with the community. It isn't the only alternative. The project needs to be turned back a page and be analyzed in terms of the primary issues; scale, configuration, and preservation. The project seems to have advanced pretty far without thinking about how the tank fits into the surrounding fabric.
- Batra:** The tank could be painted with scenery that might lessen the scale somewhat. Have you thought about an underground tank?
- Alfi:** Water tanks really need to be as high as possible. Burying the tank would put the water level below the surrounding houses. This would have serious repercussions in the amount of water pressure to these citizens. Lowering the water level will cause problems in case of power failures. We could paint the exterior with a graphic design. We have done a similar project in West Seattle by replacing an existing tank with a tank that is similar to this one. We have received positive comments from the neighbors about the new tank and its graphic design.
- Dubrow:** Simply painting the exterior won't help the scale of this tank.
- Sundberg:** How is the tank made? Are there ways to reveal the structure of the tank on the outside in an effort to scale it down? Right now it is so gigantic that I don't have any idea of its scale. It loses touch with its context.
- Alfi:** The tanks are basically steel sheets bent into arcs and welded together. There isn't much else in terms of structure. Elevated tanks are another option.
- Dubrow:** Look back to the tank and shell construction of the existing tanks and the effort that was made to fit into the urban fabric. They tried to develop a form and texture around the tank. The options for this new tank are really to either screen it, hide it, bury it, or

scale it down. We don't deny the functional issues involved, but would like you to consider the issues of neighborhood fit as well.

Foley: I am intrigued by the old towers. It seems that preservation is not high on your list of options. I do lament the loss of the existing towers. Perhaps they could be preserved for another function. Admitting my ignorance of the city's water system I know that some existing reservoirs are being eliminated or downsized. Therefore, I wonder if there is a real need for the increased capacity driving this project?

Alfi: In some neighborhoods we have excess capacity, while in others we don't. We do analyze the cost, function, and the value of demolition and replacement, of tanks. These tanks have severe structural problems including unsafe maintenance situations. Access to the tank for maintenance is unsafe for our crews. The concrete quality of the shells is very poor.

Hansmire: What sets the height of the new tank at 65 feet? If a property owner tried to build a six-story apartment building, the City would be in arms. How is the City getting away with putting this tank in?

Alfi: We are using the site for its original purpose and maintaining the height of the original tanks, so height restrictions are not applicable.

Luebke: Without having the tank at that elevation, we won't have adequate fire-fighting capabilities in that area.

Hansmire: What is the critical height for fire fighting needs?

Luebke: It is right at the minimum now.

Dubrow: Smaller tanks at the same height could do the same thing.

Aigbe: We can't have the same capacity with two tanks.

Dubrow: I don't buy into the need for doubled capacity. It seems like a problem of where you site extra capacity, and this site is too tight. Replacing the existing tank capacity is fine. The scale of the new double-capacity tank doesn't fit.

Black: The Community is very excited about having increased water capacity because it means more water pressure.

Alfi: A computer analysis gives us the capacity needed for the current population and we design a tank to fit the required capacity.

Dubrow: I would just like to add the criteria of urban fit to the design analysis. Functional needs are not the only issues anymore. I see the functions being designed, but not the fit of the tank in its surroundings.

Hansmire: How will water be supplied during construction?

Alfi: It will be pumped from other areas. Construction of the tank will be done in the winter, when the demand is lowest.

Batra: Are you using a turbine pump? If so, what are the noise level impacts on the community?

Aigbe: Early in the process we hired a consultant to evaluate the noise levels. The result was that noise levels would be below the Noise Ordinance requirements. There is already a similar facility in West Seattle with impressively low noise levels.

Batra: What kind of drainage is in the station in case of flood?

Luebke: There is a flood outflow.

Foley: What kind of trees are being used around the tank?

Black: There are primarily pear trees, adding color to the site. The site's perimeter trees are mostly maple.

Dubrow: It would be helpful to approach the community with various alternatives. These might include designs for the current capacity, enlarged capacity with multiple tanks, and the single double-capacity tank shown here. I also encourage you to go beyond the

immediate neighborhood for comments. You may also try to get on the agenda of neighborhood planning meetings already scheduled. It would lessen your workload. It also seems that the system-wide planning process needs an urban design consultant to inform the City about the types of sites it intends to use. Having “urban fit” as criteria in the site selection process would result in better criteria being developed at individual sites.

Aigbe: We are essentially a group of tank designers, not planners, and assume that the planners have already gone through those steps.

ACTION: **Briefing only, no action required. The Commission greatly appreciates the thorough presentation of both the pump station and the new tank. The Commission would recommend approval of the pump station as presented. The Commission appreciates the organization and capacity issues presented, but would not recommend approval based on serious reservations about the new tank in terms of its overall scale and its fit in the surrounding urban fabric. The Commission would like to see a more thorough analysis of the existing tanks, a design alternative that develops a better urban fit, and the community’s response to the current design.**

121897.2 Project: **SDC Transition Paper**
 Time: 1 hr. (N/C)

Michael Read presented the draft transition paper for Commission discussion and approval.

121897.3 Project: **Commission Business**

Action Items

A. MINUTES OF DECEMBER 4TH, 1997: Approved as amended.

Discussion Items

B. WSCTC EXPANSION PROJECT / DECEMBER 1 ACTION: Wagoner reported. Meeting scheduled for January 8, 1997.

C. HARBOR AVENUE: Wagoner and Swift reported.

D. HOLLY PARK/ PHASE II DEVELOPMENT DESIGN REVIEW: Swift reported.

E. JOINT MUNICIPAL CAMPUS WORK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS: Staff reported on meeting with Mayor-elect Paul Schell.

121897.4 Project: **“Growing Vine Street”**
 Phase: Schematics
 Presenters: Gregg Waddel, Carlson Architects
 Carolyn Geise, Geise Architects
 Buster Simpson, consultant
 Peggy Gaynor, consultant

Attendees: Karen Anderson, Bittenbender Intracorp
 Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Ben-Shmuel & Associates
 Glenn MacGilvra, Friends of P-Patch
 Andrew Russin, Carlson Architects
 Ben Russin, Bohlin/Cywinski/Jackson
 Aiban Stretch, SDG
 Peter Voorhees, Seattle Transportation
 Joe Wang, Bittenbender Intracorp
 Time: 1. hr. (N/C)

The Vine Street/Green Street project has been slowly developing for over five years through the combined efforts of the Belltown P-Patch committee and the Denny Regrade Neighborhood Planning Group. The project will design a network of Green Streets for the Regrade, develop design guidelines for Green Street development, and design a special street for the Vine Street/Green Street.

The Denny Regrade is the fastest growing urban residential area with an anticipated increase of over 6,500 households in the next 20 years—more than any other Seattle neighborhood. The Growing Vine Street Project is taking action to prepare for this future growth now. The goal is to create a pedestrian-friendly environment that brings nature back to the city and provides a pleasant, healthy place to live and work.

The first objective in this project is to develop a Master Plan for Green Streets, alleys, entry points, and nodes to provide a network of pedestrian circulation within the Regrade and Belltown, as well as providing connections to adjoining activities and neighborhoods. The second objective is to develop Design Guidelines for Green Street development and recommend code revisions specific to needs and opportunities in Belltown and the Denny Regrade. The third objective is to develop Vine Street as a major component of this pedestrian circulation. The Vine Street/Green Street is to be a linear park providing an urban haven in which to enjoy art and beauty, meet neighbors and experience nature.

The funding for Growing Vine Street/Green Street Design Study has come from the City of Seattle, King County, the neighborhood, through fund raising events, in-kind contributions, and hundreds of hours of in-kind contributions of labor by volunteers.

This project is currently in Phase One of the following four phases:

- Phase One: Discovery – Preliminary Master Plan. Fall of 1997.
- Phase Two: Planning – Vine Street/Green Street. Fall/Winter of 1997.
- Phase Three: Detailed Design and Engineering – Construction Documents and Cost Estimates. Winter/ Spring of 1998.
- Phase Four: Review and Revision – Final Master Plan and Design Guidelines. Spring/Summer of 1998.

Discussion:

Dubrow: This was an interesting presentation. I have personally grown frustrated with the tendency to create green streets with lines of trees. I appreciate the amount of plants in this design, but it seems to have almost too much green. It seems to call for some additional hardscape. I am also concerned about how the edges and contours of Vine Street will connect to crossing streets. This project seems to be driven by a single principle, which makes me wonder about alternative designs.

Foley: I like the way this project has been a catalyst for neighborhood communication along

the Vine Street corridor. The expression of storm water collection and storage is interesting. I urge you to communicate with the engineering department and your engineering consultant about water issues to keep the concepts at a feasible level. I am glad to see that the design could still work without a continuous water supply. If the expression of water continues as a significant part of the concept, then something important needs to happen at the end of the street near the waterfront.

- Batra:** I am concerned about traffic and the effects of leaking oil and antifreeze on the plantings.
- Simpson:** The City is currently looking at those issues as well. The plants could actually be used as indicators of pollution levels in the water.
- Gaynor:** We are actually adding another layer of drainage protection to what already exists. It can also function as a reminder to the public about what happens to street water run-off.
- Swift:** I appreciate the comprehensive nature of the presentation with design principles and guidelines. Perhaps these could become principles for other green streets, stretching popular thinking about the treatment of green streets. This project is occurring in a community that idiosyncratically reflects its activities. We must assume that you are going to lose some part of this design, even with strong support. I would like to know how we could help.
- Geise:** Seattle Transportation seems to have grasped the vision of the project. After our meeting with them we received positive comments about the concept. We are not yet getting lost in code issues.
- Gaynor:** They like the fissure idea. Private developers are currently having implementation problems.
- Geise:** We are having some progress, but more has to be worked out.
- Dubrow:** It seems appropriate for us to send a letter to the mayor asking what the City could offer developers for cooperation with this project.
- Gaynor:** There might be some trade-offs available for developers.
- Dubrow:** With seven developers you are in good position to say that they effect the character of the space.
- Geise:** How could developers already involved get benefits from this project?
- Swift:** You have figured out the basic driving components. Now you should look at the project as individual blocks regarding new developments to figure out what needs to be contributed.
- Geise:** We are having three workshops in January with each of the seven developers, totaling 21 meetings. These begin with the central portion of the project first, since that is where most developers are interested.
- Dubrow:** What are the parts involved for developers to deal with?
- Simpson:** They would include the building plumbing for storm water collection, treatment of the alley, and curb issues. We recognize the need for balance between this and the greater context of the project.
- Gaynor:** We are actually trying to preserve some of the existing sidewalks. We are also trying to redirect the funds from required street trees and new sidewalks to be used on developing this project.
- Swift:** You are essentially trying to rebuild a watershed. That is difficult to do on a block-by-block basis.
- Gaynor:** We are planning to have an underground system in place for overflow control and to feed catch basins.
- Hansmire:** Changing the profile of the street is the major practical issue with this project. I am

concerned that the bottom of the swale will be below the crown of the old brick street.

Swift: It is a great project conceptually, but you need to get into the engineering issues as soon as possible.

Geise: We are about to have another meeting with our Seattle Transportation department representative.

Dubrow: Will there be any requests for alley vacations in upcoming projects.

Geise: No, not at this point.

Action: **The Commission recommends approval of the schematic design as presented. The Commission strongly supports the intent to incorporate storm water and run-off to create an environment. The Commission also encourages early engineering and Seattle Transportation consultations on the practical implementation of the project.**

121897.5 Project: **2600 Vine Street** (2600 3rd Avenue)
 Phase: Briefing
 Presenters: Karen Anderson, Bittenbender Intracorp
 Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Ben-Shmuel & Associates
 Attendees: Joe Wang, Bittenbender Intracorp
 Time: .5 hr. (hourly)

This project is a quarter block development located on the corner of Third Street and Vine Street. It will be a new building with at least 60-condominium units and ground floor retail. The developers have discussed the Green Street project and its implications with the city and are interested in developing aspects of the Vine Street/Green Street project. However, the City will not allow a frontage only building. The developers will be required to provide pedestrian improvements for either the full block between Third and Fourth Streets on the north side of Vine Street or to provide improvements on the half block between Third Street and the alley on both sides of Vine Street. Given this choice, costs prohibit doing any of the green street project improvements, and the developers will only be able to replace existing elements as required.

Discussion:

Dubrow: What would be the cost of providing improvements for the whole block?

Anderson: It is difficult to predict the cost with so many unknown variables, such as various utility replacements and foundation issues with existing structures.

Hansmire: Another issue is the sidewalk widening at the intersection and how it effects street configuration.

Swift: If we support the green street notion, the real question is the reasonableness of the current code.

Ben-Shmuel: There are currently contradictory rules in the code. The code deals with the flow of the street, not how it is paid for or constructed. In projects with many developers it creates situations where the City backs away.

Swift: Who is handling these code issues, DCLU? It seems that the Design Commission

could play a role in the process.

Wagoner: Most green street codes don't deal with design issues.

Dubrow: This is a logical proposal. It seems that the street continuity intent of the code will be met although the improvements will take a different form.

Foley: Perhaps instead of funding the project in segments of improvements, developers could pay into a bond or pool of money so that the project happens all at once.

Hansmire: The project will require reworking the street. Individual implementation could be very difficult.

Dubrow: There seems to be willingness on the part of the Commission to have a dialog with DCLU. It is also important to galvanize many developers in the discussion.

Hansmire: Can't green street properties contribute to mitigation elsewhere? Is there a way for developers to provide a simple temporary solution and contribute additional funds to the completion of the project later?

Swift: It seems that the green street planning process may need to be accelerated.

Wagoner: It is unlikely that DCLU staff have a good grasp of the overall project. I suggest that you have a briefing in early January with the land-use staff. The Design Commission could ask land-use staff for a meeting. I can raise the issue within the department, and we could host a meeting with those involved.

Dubrow: Is there a regulatory framework for implementing green streets?

Hansmire: There also needs to be interim methods of implementation that are based on the entire plan for the street.

Anderson: The issues of accessibility are based on street elevations. If the elevations can be set, then building projects can go forward.

Hansmire: Using the existing elevations is the most feasible.

Action: **Briefing only, no action required. The Commission would like to see the Growing Vine Street project continue to develop and offer to assist in this process where possible. The Commission is willing to work with Land-Use staff to accelerate the Green Street planning process and develop a regulatory framework for implementing Green Streets. The Commission recognizes that the project will only succeed if done as a single unit rather than as individual sections.**

121897.6 Project: **Sand Point Reuse Project**
 Phase: Site Visit
 Presenters: Mike Usen, Office of Management and Planning
 Time: 2.5 hr. (N/C)

The Commission was given a thorough tour of the Sand Point project site. This tour was intended to give the Commissioners a better overall understanding of the project, since individual projects on the site might later come before the Commission. The Commission then discussed the Sand Point Design Review process for individual projects with Sand Point planning staff and directors.

FINAL SAND POINT REUSE PLAN
 as adopted by City Council
 June 16, 1997

